

Indiana Trails Advisory Board

September 6, 2012 – 3:00 PM

Redbird State Riding Area
County Road 350 North, Dugger, IN 47848

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Tim Garrett – All Terrain Vehicle Users
Nancy Tibbett – Bicyclists
Yvette Rollins – Equestrians
John McNichols – Higher Education/Health
Tim Calahan – Hikers
Jeff Fetterer – Mountain Bike Users
Melody Jones – Parks & Recreation Agencies
Len Neisler – Snowmobilers
Melisa Culbertson – Trail Support Groups
Ric Edwards – Users with Disabilities
Daniel Plath – Water Trail Users

DNR Staff:

David Cox
Lynda Ellington
Carman Jackson
Leah Kopp

Guests:

Nathan Cross
Tracina Cross
Ed Rosary
Vic VanGilder
Gary Williams - ABATE

Proxies:

Roy Garrett – Off-Road Motorcyclists

Welcome

Chairwoman Yvette Rollins welcomed everyone. She thanked Tim Garrett for hosting the meeting and providing the food.

Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of June 2012 Minutes

Melisa Culbertson moved to approve the minutes. Tim Calahan seconded. Motion carried.

Department Report

David Cox thanked Tim Garrett for hosting the meeting. He also thanked Lynda Ellington with Shakamak SP/Redbird SRA for helping with the meeting arrangements.

Nominations – December 1, nominations will open for five user group positions on TAB. The positions include All Terrain Vehicles, Equestrians, Four Wheel Drive Users, Pedestrians, and Snowmobilers. A DNR media release will go out statewide announcing the details.

Fund Accounts- David reported the OHV fund and Snowmobile fund are on track to be separated. The two funds have been kept in one account but tracked separately which is a cumbersome process. Approval has been granted to move the funds into two separate accounts.

Equis - In 2008, the state purchased 150 miles of old railroad corridor for future trail development. A report was given on the process and status of moving these parcels toward transfer to local governments for trail building.

Old Business

Hoosier Outdoor Experience - Yvette asked if anyone was having difficulty registering on the HOE volunteer site. She said some groups reported it was hard to figure out if they were volunteering for their user group or for the DNR. David announced that if anyone was having problems to let him know so he could get the message to the appropriate people. He said this is how we learn to improve the experience - by getting feedback from those involved. Hundreds of volunteers are needed for the event. Everyone was asked to tell people about HOE.

2013 Trails Conference Planning – Yvette explained that at the June meeting the decision was made to move the conference to November 2013. She believes this should be a trail building and maintenance workshop. Much discussion followed. Tim Garrett wanted to know if there could be certified training for chain sawing. Melody Jones expressed that four days would be too long to hold a workshop because many people could not get off work for that long. Most members felt the second weekend in November 2013 is the best time to hold the conference. There was concern about accommodations at Interlake especially since there is no running water and it's not more centrally located. There was discussion that if the conference was held earlier the weather may be more predictable. However, most members believe since the event will feature field work that November is the best time. David reminded members that moving it to November 2013 was already decided at the June meeting. He said this allows plenty of time for conference organizing and by planning now TAB can get quality speakers. The committees need to meet and they can do it through conference calls or video conferencing.

Roy Garrett suggested holding the event at the Lawrence County Recreation Park because it is more centrally located. It's close to Bloomington and Bedford. There are trails and soil to work with. Also, LCRP has a campground with electricity and water along with flush toilets. After much discussion, Len Neisler moved to hold the conference workshop over the November 7-10, 2013 weekend at the Lawrence County Recreation Park because it is more centrally located, has electric, water, parking and close accommodations with easy access. Jeff Fetterer seconded. The motion carried unanimously. It was suggested that in two weeks the topics committee should be presenting names for those persons who would be interested in doing a presentation. Melody Jones recommended the board target certain audiences for each day. One of the target audiences could be trail building certification with one being for motorized and the other non-motorized. Roy Garrett and Tim Calahan said the DNR doesn't recognize certifications. Len said he had never heard of a certified trail builder. He explained that snowmobilers don't really have trail issues in Indiana. With snowmobile trails, there are always new agreements with land owners and the clubs are responsible for trail building, maintenance, and signage. Roy said he put in trails for 30 years but is not recognized by the DNR as a certified trail builder. Tim Garrett felt if TAB is moving forward on the workshop with volunteers putting in their time but not recognized by the state then we are at a tipping point. He said trail volunteers are not certified so they are moving targets. Tim believes conference attendees may wonder why they took time off work to attend a workshop where they won't be certified. Ric Edwards reported nobody is certified as a disability entity and suggested moving away from the word certification. He said to just follow the requirements that need to be met with the focus on building quality trails. People should be able to apply the appropriate standards.

Jeff Fetterer said the mission of the workshop should be trail building education instead of certification. Gary Williams expressed he is not ADA certified but he has read books and websites to obtain information to get the tools necessary to know what is acceptable and what isn't. Roy agreed we need to work toward education and not certification. Some other possible topics are safety, grant writing, ADA accessible canoe/kayak launch sites, and RTP project proposals. Jeff said they must make sure a motivated volunteer base will be a conference focus so that volunteers can polish the skills they already have.

New Business

RTP Funding Update - August 23, Governor Daniels made an official announcement where he recommitted to federal trails funding. He announced Indiana will continue to participate in the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) that has provided \$14.5 million in federal funds for more than 100 trails projects in the state since 1994.

The Moving ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) recently passed by Congress reauthorized RTP for the next two federal fiscal years beginning Oct. 1 but also gave governors the option to not participate. Daniels chose to renew Indiana's commitment to trails initiatives, which fits with the Hoosiers on the Move plan he announced in 2006.

"Hoosiers on the Move established an ambitious goal of having a trail with 7.5 miles or 15 minutes of every Hoosier citizen by the year 2016," Daniels said. "We're getting close, and continued funding from the Recreational Trails Program over the next two years will put us over the top in fulfilling that goal."

RTP is a matching grant through the Federal Highway Administration that funds multiple trail types, including bicycle/pedestrian greenways, mountain biking, equestrian, water and motorized (ATV, motorcycle, four-wheel drive). RTP funds are routed through the Indiana Department of Transportation and administered by the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation.

"We have completed over 100 miles of trails and funded development of Redbird and Interlake state recreation areas that provide access to 75 more miles of trail specializing in motorized vehicle recreation," said Steve Morris, director of DNR Outdoor Recreation. "Other noteworthy projects include the award-winning mountain bike trails at Brown County State Park, and rail-trails like Pumpkinvine in Elkhart County and Panhandle Pathway near Winamac.

"Numerous other greenway and community park trails have been completed in 53 counties that have received RTP funding."

Indiana's RTP provides 80 percent federal reimbursement for eligible projects, which must provide public access to trails. All units of government and agencies incorporated as not-for-profit corporations are eligible to participate. Applicants may request grant amounts from a minimum \$10,000 to a maximum of \$150,000.

RTP funding is derived from revenue received by the Federal Highway Trust Fund from the federal motor fuel excise tax paid by users of off-road motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles and off-road light trucks.

One of the requirements for a state to receive RTP is having a state trails advisory board. More discussion followed on the RTP funding and the importance of it.

User Group Reports

All Terrain Vehicle Users – Tim Garrett reported the ATV community and Redbird continue to find good experiences on theme based rides. Attendance numbers tend to spike at Redbird on weekends when foundation members come out. It has been a good year for trails and they are in great shape he announced.

Bicyclists – Nancy Tibbett reported since bicyclists use roads that they are working hard to promote safety on the roadways. They are partnering with the Criminal Justice Institute and working with the Drivers Education program to educate young drivers on sharing the roadways with bicyclists. She also announced the Hilly Hundred would take place October 19-21 in Bloomington with approximately 4,500 riders participating in the event.

Equestrians – Yvette Rollins reported a huge trail clean-up would take place on Thanksgiving weekend at Brown County State Park. She also praised the Indiana Heritage Corps kids for the trail re-route they did. She said there are 24 miles of trails for youth at O'Bannon State Park and the new HYCC participants are working at Shakamac too.

Higher Education/Health – John McNichols gave a short biography and shared his involvement with trail development in the Terre Haute/Vigo County area. He has been a tremendous advocate for trails.

Hikers – Tim Calahan said he had nothing to report.

Mountain Bike Users – Jeff Fetterer announced the Brown County Breakdown would be held October 12-14. It is a great event and there will be rides from 20 to 100 miles. There will also be a 24 hour race at Versailles State Park. Improvements at O'Bannon SP are going very slowly but they are going very well at Ft. Benjamin Harrison State Park.

Off-Road Motorcyclists – Roy Garrett reported they attended the Boat, Sport, and Travel Show. They are also getting more involved with education. They will be attending the Hoosier Outdoor Experience and sponsoring Toys for Tikes at Interlake. The Motorcycle Expo is February 22-24, 2013.

Parks and Recreation Agencies – Melody Jones announced that a 5K benefit run for Indiana Trails would be held on September 29. The event is called BFIT and will be held at Anderson in Shadyside Park.

Snowmobilers – Len Neisler reported the annual Snow Show is December 1-2 at the Porter County Fair and Exposition Center in Valparaiso.

Trail Support Groups – Melisa Culbertson had nothing to report.

Users with Disabilities – Ric Edwards had nothing to report.

Water Trail Users – Dan Plath reported they have been very busy in northwest Indiana. An 18 mile sea kayak race took place at Dunes State Park and good competition was attracted for the race. They are sponsoring several educational classes on canoeing/kayaking. Four new kayaks were added to their fleet. Dan said they are also doing an environmental study on the east branch of the Little Calumet River.

Other Business

Gary Williams reported he spoke with Renfro Productions about the Boat, Sport, & Travel Show. If there are any other groups in anyone's area of interest that would be interested in having a booth at the show they need to contact Todd Jamison. He also spoke about RTP funding and how important it is to talk to your legislators about the importance of RTP funding. Talking to them one on one is best. If you can't do that then call them and follow up with a letter. It doesn't do any good to email. Always send a thank you letter.

Announcements

Hoosier Outdoor Experience – September 15-16, 2012 Ft. Harrison SP

National Bike Summit – March 4-7, 2013

Road School at Purdue - March 5-7, 2013

American Trails International Trails Symposium – April 14-17, 2013

Greenways Foundation grants are available up to \$500.

Future Meeting Dates

Yvette Rollins said there is an opportunity to have the December meeting at Rawhide Ranch in Nashville, Indiana. Tim Calahan moved to hold the December meeting at the ranch if the opportunity was still available. Len Neisler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

December 6 – Rawhide Ranch (Brown County)

Adjournment

Roy Garrett moved for adjournment. Len Neisler seconded. Motion carried.